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 STAT

UP-093

(RADIATION)

(BY JIM ANDERSON)

WASHINGTON (UPI) - THE STATE DEPARTMENT SAID WEDESDAY THE RUSSIANS HAVE SHARPLY INCREASED THEIR MICROWAVE BOMBARDMENT OF THE U.S. MOSCOW EMBASSY OVER THE PAST TWO MONTHS.

DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN JOHN TRATTNER SAID THERE HAVE BEEN BURSTS OF INCREASED RADIATION, LASTING LESS THAN ONE HOUR EACH, SINCE SEPT. 7.

HE SAID THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS, BUT HAS RECEIVED NO EXPLANATION.

OFFICIALLY, THE SOVIETS HAVE ALWAYS DENIED THAT THEY BEAM MICROWAVES AT THE U.S. EMBASSY. THEY MAINTAIN THE SOURCE OF THE RADIATION, WHICH PROVOKED A HEALTH SCARE WHEN IT BECAME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE LAST YEAR, IS LEAKAGE FROM THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND EAVESDROPPING DEVICES ON THE EMBASSY'S TOP FLOOR.

TRATTNER SAID THE NEW, INTENSIFIED RADIATION BURSTS REACHED THE POWER OF NINE MICROWATTS PER SQUARE CENTIMETER - ONE MICROWATT BELOW THE SOVIET INDUSTRIAL SAFETY STANDARD AND CONSIDERABLY BELOW THE U.S. SAFETY STANDARD.

AFTER THE UNITED STATES FILED PROTESTS LAST YEAR, U.S. OFFICIALS SAID THE SOVIETS DROPPED THE RADIATION LEVEL TO ABOUT TWO MICROWATTS PER SQUARE CENTIMENTER.

U.S. OFFICIALS SPECULATE THAT THE MICROWAVES ARE PART OF A SOPHISTICATED SOVIET EAVESDROPPING SYSTEM, WHICH REFLECT SOUND WAVES BACK TO A REMOTE LISTENER.

TRATTNER SAID THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO DATE THAT THE RADIATION HAS HAD ANY ILL EFFECTS ON EMBASSY EMPLOYEES. A FULLSCALE STUDY BY JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL WILL NOT BE FINISHED UNTIL NEXT JUNE.

A STUDY BY THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS SAYS THAT ONE EFFECT OF SUCH RADIATION IS TO STIMULATE THE GROWTH OF LYMPHOCYTE CELLS IN THE BLOODCELLS OF ANIMALS. LYMPHOCYTES, A TYPE OF WHITE BLOOD CELLS, ARE PART OF THE BODY'S DEFENSE MECHANISM AGAINST INFECTION.

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